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ABSTRACT

These four videotape scripts consist of panel discussions on various facets of the student teaching experience from the viewpoint of the cooperating teacher. Participants include two supervisors from the Oklahoma State University College of Education and four cooperating teachers from the area; the kindergarten, elementary, junior high, and secondary levels are all represented. Focus questions are provided for each of the scripts, which include introducing Student Teachers to the Student Teaching Experience, Student Teaching and Classroom Management, Conferencing and Evaluation of Student Teachers, and Introducing University Students to Pre-Student Teaching Experiences. (CMV)

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STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Part V-VIII

by

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STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Part V: Introducing Student Teachers to the Student Teaching Experience

Focus Questions

1. In what way do you currently introduce the student teacher to the student teaching experience?

2. How best can a student teacher be introduced to the student teaching experience so as to promote a sense of acceptance of the student teacher

   (a) by the cooperating teacher
   (b) by the classroom students
   (c) by other school personnel?

3. What kinds of pre-student teaching experiences (visits to schools, observations, etc.) do you think best prepare the student teacher for the student teaching experience?

4. How can the cooperating teacher and student teacher begin to develop a trust relationship from these initial introductory experiences?

5. How much initiative do you think student teachers should make to introduce themselves to the student teaching experience?

STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE was produced through a research grant from the Oklahoma Cooperative for Clinical Experiences in Teacher Education. Co-directors of the project were Dr. Douglas B. Aichele and Dr. Kathryn Castle both of the College of Education of Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

STUDENT TEACHING - A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

PART V: INTRODUCING STUDENT TEACHERS TO THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Dr. Aichele. Well, I am glad you could be with us this afternoon. We thought that we would take a little time to discuss some of the parts of student teaching that frequently present problems to student teachers and cooperating teachers. I think we are quite fortunate this afternoon as we have convened a panel of veteran teachers and supervisors who have been involved in this type of work for many years. Initially, I would like to introduce the panel to you.

My name is Doug Aichele. I am a secondary level supervisor emphasizing the discipline of mathematics. Sitting on my right is Dr. Kathryn Castle, an elementary and kindergarten supervisor. The two of us represent the perspective of the university in this discussion. Starting over there on my extreme right representing the cooperating teacher perspective is Otis Autry, a science teacher at Washington High School. He teaches biology courses primarily and has been involved with us in earlier taped discussions. As a matter of fact, all of the members of this panel were involved in earlier video taping. Sitting next to Otis is Patti Dyer. She teaches language arts and communication skills at Wilson Junior High School. Sitting immediately on my left is Velva Jo Johnson, a kindergarten teacher at Cooper Elementary School. Sitting next to her is Mary Faye McFarlin. She is an English teacher at Edison High School.

I thought what we might do to start things off is to consider techniques for introducing student teachers to the student teaching experience. This is always a most critical time for both the student teacher as well as the cooperating teacher. Do most of you prefer some kind of "initial encounter" or some kind of pre-visitation before the student teaching experience actually begins?

Mr. Autry. I sure would. The last student teacher I had from Oklahoma State University came out to the school about four weeks before starting time and he got an idea of what the classwork was about. He also picked up some textbooks. I appeared as friendly as I could and welcomed him to the school. I also took him to the office and he visited with the principal. He did observe the students which I thought was very helpful. He also came back about two weeks later which was about two weeks before the starting time and that was helpful too.

Mrs. Dyer. I think visitation prior to the beginning of the experience is very important too. However, as we were discussing earlier, I have had several student teachers. I actually had one student teacher who was assigned to me during the first semester. That student teacher was able to be with us during the teacher work days that we had prior to the arrival of the students. But other than that, none of the student teachers I have had have ever to my knowledge been assigned to visit the school ahead of time. I think that it actually does put the cooperating teacher, the student teacher, and the students at somewhat of a disadvantage if this prior meeting does not take place. While the cooperating teacher knows that he/she

will have a student teacher, when the student teacher walks into the room, the teacher is involved in the beginning of the class and the students are already beginning to work. It's just a "hello" and "yes, you are in the right place." That's about all you can say right then. I think a prior visit would be very valuable.

Dr. Castle. I work with a group of student teachers 8-weeks before they begin their student teaching experience. As part of their methods class, I have them go into their cooperating teacher's classroom 4-weeks before the student teaching experience begins to get them familiar with their cooperating teacher, the children, and the classroom situation. I think it is so important for them to become familiar with the rules and to learn what is going to be expected from them so that when the experience begins, they can jump right into it. They have the preliminaries already over with. I think it makes them feel a lot more comfortable.

Mrs. Johnson. I have found that the students who have visited and observed ahead of time gave me an opportunity to get acquainted with them. Sometimes they have problems they need to work out. Such as, living arrangements, I have had several who needed help finding apartments. It would make them feel more comfortable if they need extra help or counseling to talk to the teacher that they are going to work with after school and become acquainted with her on more of a friendly basis. I think that helps them feel more at ease on the first day besides just getting acquainted with the children.

Ms. McFarlin. I think that it is very important and should be a requirement that the student teacher get acquainted with the teacher. The student teacher feels much more comfortable after he/she has become acquainted with the teacher, the materials, and the level of work that the students do. I think they need to feel that comfort.

Dr. Aichele. You have mentioned several important things. This feeling of acceptance is really the key. Speaking as a supervisor, much like Kathryn, we have our methods during the first part of the semester and are actually student teaching during the second part. When the students return from these experiences, they do have real feelings about whether they think their student teaching is going to be successful, whether they like their cooperating teacher, how they were greeted when they entered the school, and how they were accepted. Perhaps the major goal of this encounter would be to put the student teacher a little more at ease with regard to the acceptability into the system.

Dr. Castle. I think that first experience when they enter the school, how they are welcomed or not welcomed at that time, is so crucial to their general overall attitude and impression when they start the student teaching experience. I have had a couple of student teachers who were so excited before student teaching began because their cooperating teachers wrote them an introductory letter introducing themselves and enclosing the children's work and letters from the children saying that they were eager to meet the student teacher. This really did get the student teacher very enthused and excited about beginning.

Mrs. Dyer. Another thing that we have to understand is that the

student teachers are apt to be a bit nervous about any number of things. This would help to ease them into the situation more comfortably so that when they come into that building the first day, they will meet the students with more confidence.

Dr. Aichele. It is very fair to say that they are scared. They reflect that fear in a variety of ways. Sometimes they can even make some judgimental statements about what they have observed for perhaps two hours. They like or dislike their cooperating teacher based on that limited observation. I think we all agree that some type of initial encounter is beneficial to the school, to the student teacher, the students, and the cooperating teacher. When the student teacher actually arrives at the beginning of the student teaching experience, the feelings of acceptance may be turned to feelings of a desire to develop a trust relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. Perhaps we want to talk a little bit about that. How do you encourage this feeling of trust between you and the student teacher?

Mr. Autry. I always tell the student teacher that the line of communication is open at all times and be sure to ask all questions. If you want to know something, be sure to check with me. Let them know that you are flexible and friendly. This is very helpful.

Mrs. Johnson. Along that same line, I remind my student teachers that what works for me might not necessarily work for them and to feel free to try new ways. If they don't like the way I do things, that is fine because there is more than one way to do it. That way I want them to feel at ease and comfortable and make them feel that they are to do what comes easy and natural for them.

Mr. Autry. A lot of times I feel that way too. You may not do as well as I because I have been in the field for a number of years. I may know a little more. But maybe you may do better than I. It's hard to tell. Things that work today may not work tomorrow. And things that work in one class may not work in another class.

Mrs. Dyer. I think that's right. Perhaps the cooperating teacher can convey the idea to the student teacher that the cooperating teacher is anxious to hear what ideas he has, anxious to hear if he has a new approach that he would like to try in a particular area. I think the main thing to avoid is this idea of "I am superior, you are still far beneath me in ability". We need to avoid the idea of "well, you'll learn".

Ms. McFarlin. They need to be treated as teachers. That initial encounter with the teacher should put them pretty much at ease. After that, I think they do get the feeling of really being a teacher. I think that we should encourage that. I usually tell my students that they are fortunate to have an apprentice teacher because then they get my old ideas and the student teacher's new ideas. I think that is important to the students.

Dr. Castle. When my student teachers come back from their initial introduction to the cooperating teacher, the ones who are really excited are

the ones who comment that the teacher introduced them as another teacher rather than as a student or a student teacher. They are very excited about being treated on an equal level.

Mrs. Dyer. Another thing that we should remember is that it's a difficult transition from being perhaps a teacher in the morning and a student in the afternoon when they return to the classroom, or a student the last day of the semester and a teacher the next day or the next week. It's a pretty quick transition.

Dr. Aichele. Following right along with that, the student roll is one that in a sense sometimes can be characterized as lacking in initiative. Now they are placed in a situation where they have to assume a lot of initiative. A question I frequently get is just how much initiative should I assume? My teacher hasn't asked me to do anything, I usually respond, "Have you asked the teacher what kinds of things you can bring to share with her in class?" Many times student teachers don't think of it quite that way. They think about constantly being directed.

Ms. McFarlin. That's the reason I like for my student teachers to sit in front of the room. Teaching juniors and seniors is a little different than at some of the other levels. I try to actually give my students the impression that this person is team teaching here with me.

Dr. Aichele. You actually position the student teacher near the front?

Ms. McFarlin. Yes. I have a desk right near mine where the student teacher sits. I encourage student teachers to enter into classroom discussions when they feel that there is something to gain. I think this gives them the feeling of authority they need. Their big fear seems to be: Will the students accept me as an authority figure?

Mrs. Johnson. One thing I have tried to do on the elementary level is to encourage the student teachers to walk around the room and look at what the children are doing, to get acquainted with the children and to try to see just how many different activities are going on within the room at one time. That gives them more of a feeling of belonging and also helps the children to realize that this is someone who really cares about me. This is someone who knows a little bit about what I am doing. They should be willing to help a child if he needs special attention and encourage them right from the very beginning, even though they are there only to observe.

Mrs. Dyer. I've made conscientious efforts to plan an activity on the first day that the student teacher is going to be there, in which each student will work individually on a particular assignment at his/her desk. The students make it a practive that if they run into a problem they can't solve or whatever it might be, they raise their hands. I move around from desk to desk. The first day I had an activity like this planned. I introduced the student teacher as another teacher working in the room as a team teaching idea. On the very first day I tell the students that you may call on me or you may call on Ms. Smith or whoever it happens to be. She will also answer your questions. From the first day, the student teacher is working with the students on a one-to-one basis. That's probably best from the very

beginning. Then they are involved right from the first day. I think that's important.

Mr. Autry. The student teacher has the idea that he is doing something and feels secure. The student thinks he knows something. I do this with my laboratory work. I encourage the student teacher to go around to the ones who are not using the equipment properly to show them what to do. The student and the student teacher will feel more secure.

Ms. McFarlin. I think when you first accomplish that, your class has already accepted that student teacher as a teacher. The minute you send a student to that student teacher, the student teacher knows that he/she is accepted there. I think you have the whole process of the acceptance that we are talking about.

Dr. Aichele. I hate to have to do this, but I think our time is up. We were just getting into some interesting things. One of the things that I wanted to pursue and we will pursue later is how do you conference with the student teachers? Are earlier conferencing techniques different from later ones? We will have to discuss that later. Thanks again for being with us and we will talk about other topics later.

STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Part VI: Student Teaching and Classroom Management

Focus Questions

1. How best can the student teacher learn the classroom rules and routines early in the experience?

2. How can the cooperating teacher help the student teacher to learn the rules quickly?

3. Which classroom management techniques are most effective in facilitating learning while developing a positive attitude in pupils toward learning?

4. How can a student teacher and a cooperating teacher with divergent approaches to classroom management work together effectively?

5. Should the student teacher attempt to adopt the cooperating teacher's classroom management techniques during student teaching in order to:

   (a) provide a consistent framework for the students
   (b) "survive" the experience?

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STUDENT TEACHING - A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

PART VI: STUDENT TEACHING AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Dr. Aichele. Welcome to student teaching and classroom management, or "close encounters of the worst kind." This afternoon we would like to explore some of the management techniques and approaches to classroom management from the perspective of cooperating teachers at different levels. I would like to begin by introducing these people we have brought together today. Immediately on my right is Dr. Kathryn Castle from Oklahoma State University. She is a supervisor of kindergarten and elementary student teachers. By the way, my name is Doug Aichele. I am Director of Student Teaching at Oklahoma State University. Starting on my right is Mr. Otis Autry, a science teacher at Washington High School. Sitting next to him is Mrs. Patti Dyer who teaches communication skills at Wilson Junior High School. On my left is Mrs. Velva Jo Johnson, a kindergarten teacher at Cooper Elementary. On the end is Mary Faye McFarlin, a creative writing and language arts teacher at Edison High School.

Perhaps we might begin by acknowledging that we can't really deal with very many of the issues associated with classroom management in the short time that we have. But we will try to identify some of those that would help cooperating teachers and student teachers overcome the severe problems. Earlier this afternoon, we were all talking informally and we agreed that management is a level or an age-related topic. Some of the techniques used at some levels are inappropriate at others. Therefore, we thought we would open that way in an effort to provide our audience with the most contributions.

Ms. McFarlin. We were talking earlier about the differences in high school, junior high, and elementary. As far as high school is concerned, it seems to me that the cooperating teacher has already set up some sort of program which seems to work. The whole thing, I think, is teaching. Whatever works for you as far as getting the students calmed down, ready to learn, and produces results is what is important. I think it is very difficult for a student teacher to come in and change that drastically. I talked with my student teacher today and he said that he felt it was important for a student teacher to sit back, observe what the cooperating teacher was doing; then discuss with the teacher; and then do it his/her own way, whatever works, but not change the classroom situation.

Mrs. Dyer. I think this is true too at the junior high school level at which I teach. The classroom atmosphere, the learning atmosphere has already been developed in most cases when the student teacher arrives. In my opinion, the student teacher really has an obligation to see that the atmosphere is maintained throughout his/her student teaching experience. He may not go about each thing that he does using exactly the same techniques that the cooperating teacher uses. But I think it is important that once the learning atmosphere has been established, that it not be allowed to break down during that time.

Mrs. Johnson. Thats true even in the elementary, no matter whether

its kindergarten or sixth grade. I think any time you have an established routine, you cause confusion among the children if you change the routine. Then that causes problems with the children's behavior because they are out of pocket, so-to-speak. They don't know exactly what they are supposed to do. So the cooperating teacher really needs to talk over control management with her student teacher before the student teacher ever takes over. That way there won't be so much confusion for the children and there won't be the discipline problems for the student teacher.

Dr. Castle. As a university supervisor, I encourage my student teachers to learn the classroom rules and procedures before they ever begin their student teaching during the initial observation period. I think it's so important for them to know the rules. To be able to enforce the rules, they have to know what they are. I have found in working with my student teachers that they may learn to use a certain technique, and they may want to try and use this during their student teaching. They may find that it might be very different from the one that their cooperating teacher is using. Then they become frustrated when the children don't respond to them.

Mr. Autry. I agree with you. I believe the student teacher should go along with the cooperating teacher. But the cooperating teacher should make a statement like this, "If you have some ideas that you think will work, we will be happy to try them." I think they should get together and discuss the problems.

I do know of an example in my school a few years ago when a student teacher had different rules and regulations. You talk about problems, she had problems. She told the teachers that, "I have been taught to do this differently and I am going to do it this way." I saw the teacher walk out of the room many times shaking his head. They didn't get along very well because of that.

Mrs. Dyer. I think that one of the most important things before a student teacher takes on a new technique, or tries to use something really new in the classroom, (maybe he has an idea of what might work in a situation where perhaps the cooperating teacher isn't having much success), is to discuss it first with the cooperating teacher.

Mr. Autry. Right.

Ms. McFarlin. The thing we are interested in is the end result as long as the learning is going on. If they have a better way, that's fine. But if it's so different that the students are frustrated, then it's not fine.

Dr. Aichele. As a result of conferencing as a university supervisor with many of my students, I see that many of the problems in the area of management could be resolved if this conference concerning the rules and the procedures took place early in the experience. A student teacher will invariably make what I consider to be a common sense error based on not knowing the procedures of the school and really not knowing the kids. It seems that out of this we have all agreed that some type of early visitation about classroom procedures is very important. We encourage the students to think about alternatives and think about alternative management schemes. However, because they are there such a short period of time, it's almost inappropriate for them to deviate

very much from the established policy.

Dr. Castle. So many of the techniques that they have been taught are techniques that only work over a long period of time. When they get frustrated, I try to emphasize that they are there only for a short period and they can't totally change over night the behavior patterns that have been developed over a long period of time. It's often not too beneficial to the children to be changed like this and then to go back to a different method when the student teacher leaves.

Mrs. Johnson. Another important thing is that the student teacher know what is the appropriate behavior for the situation. The student teacher feels that she must have all the children under control and very quiet. They do not realize how much learning takes place in a noisy atmosphere. It bothers someone who is not used to this noise level, especially in the lower elementary school, because our children are just naturally noisy. That isn't a behavior problem in most instances. Therefore, the student teacher needs to step back a little bit and ask if this is really a behavior problem. Is there a cause for it? Or is this just good learning taking place?

Mrs. Dyer. I think the thing to ask about noise levels is, is it still under the control of the teacher? Do you still have control of the classroom?

Mrs. Johnson. "Controlled chaos" we sometimes call it.

Mrs. Dyer. Right. "Controlled chaos" can be beneficial.

Mr. Autry. I know that in teaching the biological sciences, the classrooms are a little noisy. I will never forget when I attended one of the institutions where they were training us how to teach the new methods and techniques. The professor made this statement, "If your principal believes in a very quiet room, then you should not try to teach these new methods and techniques."

Of course, we like for them to get together and discuss and sometimes they get a little too noisy. But we can quiet them down a little bit.

Mrs. Johnson. One thing I have found in correcting a child is I could add to the confusion if I would call his name out. But if you walk over quietly to a group that is maybe too noisy or to a child who is having a problem and talk to him very quietly in a controlled voice and state what the problem is, then you don't upset all the others. They are not looking around to see what's going on, who's in trouble, and that sort of thing. That helps control the room and yet you have eliminated the source of the problem.

Ms. McFarlin. I think that is important at the high school level too, because for one thing, I think a student teacher has to sit back and see. I know with my classes my classroom management changes with the classes. I have one very large class of leaders and it's rather difficult to control because they all have something to offer. Yet you want them to offer it. It's totally different from the other classes that I teach. So I sit down with my apprentice teacher and we talk about this kind of thing. Because with one of those kids you can go back and say, "I don't think you realize that you are getting too noisy. I know that you are contributing to what we are talking about, but you are creating chaos."

That's the kind of thing I think you have to do on any level. Talk to them individually, don't scream at the class.

Mr. Autry. I'll tell you a method I use sometimes, especially when lecturing. When a student is talking, I say, "Excuse me Mary, I was talking when you were talking," and she would say, "Oh yes, I am sorry." That has worked for me many times.

Ms. McFarlin. With young children I find sometimes that we can change an activity. Of course I am on the very lowest primary level, kindergarten. But sometimes if I want to get their attention, instead of calling their attention, I will start something like a finger play or a song. Soon they are all picking it up and looking at you. Then you have control. Then you can go on from there.

Mr. Autry. A student teacher must realize too that a method that works today may not work tomorrow.

Mrs. Johnson. Or on every child.

Dr. Aichele. Or every hour. I think that's an important thing. I can recall when I was teaching in the public schools, a couple of sections that I had were accelerated students. I could tolerate a lot more learning noise in there than I could with some of my lower sections. They seemed to need a little more direction.

Ms. McFarlin. The teacher who teaches next door to me is always talking about one of her classes being so quiet she can never get any sort of discussion going. I keep telling her that I would send her half of mine. You do have a totally different climate in the classroom and have to look at the kind of situation.

Mrs. Dyer. The problem of a overly quiet classroom can be every bit as frustrating as a noisy one because you don't know where to turn next to get a response.

Mr. Autry. You know it seems that the students come in cycles sometimes. Maybe this year they will not be as noisy as the ones I had the year before. That seems to be the trend.

Mrs. Dyer. Maybe your behavior is a little different too.

Mr. Autry. Right, that's probably true.

Dr. Aichele. What would be the best advise that we could give a student teacher who seems to have divergent methods from his cooperating teacher with regard to management techniques?

Mrs. Johnson. I think they definitely need to talk it out with their cooperating teacher. Give her the reasons why they disagree and let her express her reasons why she has found through experience that something else works. Between the two of them, they need to come to an agreement of how they are going

to handle these children. We pretty well covered that before. They really have to talk about and agree on philosophy or it isn't going to work at all.

Dr. Castle. And they must make an agreement that is in the best interest of the pupils that are in the classroom.

Mrs. Dyer. I think that an interesting way of working this out is if the cooperating teacher will always be alert for incidences that take place in the classroom such as things that he normally might not pay much attention to. If the student teacher will be alert to incidences that happen and then when the class is over and the planning period comes, say "How would you have handled that same situation?" or "What did you think of how the situation was handled?" Maybe use these as examples like the things that you might find in a textbook that are now happening in real life.

Ms. McFarlin. I appreciate the apprentice teacher who says, "How do you think I handled this?" or "How would you have handled it?" I think that's important.

Dr. Aichele. We are going to have to bring this to an end here. It seems like the time has gone very fast. We have tried to treat this topic from a positive perspective: that of classroom management rather than discipline. As a matter of fact, I don't remember the word "discipline" ever being used. There are some issues that we purposely did not get involved with. Those perhaps could be discussed with sources that would reflect more authority whan we would have here. I think basically our message has been one of cooperation between the agencies involved and management in the best interests of the students. So with that, we will close for today.

STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Part VII: Conferencing and Evaluation of Student Teachers

Focus Questions

A. Conferencing

1. What are the roles of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor in conferencing with a student teacher?

2. Who should initiate conferencing with the student teacher?

3. How often should the cooperating teacher conference with the student teacher?

4. What should be the content of a conference? Who should do most of the talking?

5. Should conferencing be informal? formal? scheduled?

6. What are the advantages of documenting a conference?

7. What techniques and methods of conferencing lead to positive professional growth in the student teacher?

B. Evaluation

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor in the evaluation process?

2. What types of evaluative feedback lead to positive professional growth in the student teacher?

3. How often should the student teacher be informally evaluated? formally evaluated?

4. Who should complete the official evaluation instruments from the university?

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STUDENT TEACHING - A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

PART VII: CONFERENCING AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Dr. Castle. We are here today as a panel of cooperating teachers and university supervisors to discuss the topics of conferencing and evaluation of student teachers. I am Kathryn Castle, a university supervisor and faculty member in Education at Oklahoma State University. On my right is Dr. Douglas Aichele, Director of Student Teaching and university supervisor at Oklahoma State University. Next to Doug is Otis Autry, science teacher at Washington High School. On my left is Velva Jo Johnson, a Kindergarten teacher at Cooper Elementary School and next to Velva Jo is Mary Faye McFarlin, an English and creative writing teacher at Edison High School.

Today we are going to look at conferencing and evaluation as being highly interrelated topics. We are going to explore the importance of conferencing and evaluation, who should initiate conferencing, how regularly it should be done, and the roles that the cooperating teacher and university supervisor should take in evaluation and conferencing. Velva Jo, how do you view the importance of conferencing and evaluation to the cooperating teacher and to the student teacher?

Mrs. Johnson. I feel that it is very essential and it must go on, at least in my situation, continually. It's something we might do, not in a formal way every day, but talk among ourselves after every group situation. I think it is very important that a rapport be established between the student teacher and the supervising teacher so that they can talk out a problem. To me that is a part of conferencing and evaluation. Then there should probably be a formal evaluation time toward the end, after you have made suggestions and constructive criticism. A formal time when you might look at the things on the evaluation sheet and talk them over with the student teacher, so he/she knows exactly what your opinion is and why you think that way.

Dr. Castle. So you really feel that the student teacher and the cooperating teacher should go over the evaluation together.

Mrs. Johnson. I really do. When it comes down to the very end, I show it to the student teacher before I send it in. Because if there are any questions, I want them to know what my thought behind it was.

Dr. Aichele. One of the problems that we face in evaluating a student teacher is that for three and a half or so years the student has been conditioned to taking exams and being evaluated, and at the end of the experience, receiving some kind of a grade. The student teaching experience is associated with enrollment in a course at a university, and consequently there has to be some kind of a grade assigned. Unfortunately, the method of determining their grade isn't quite as clear cut as it is in some courses. I think student teachers and cooperating teachers might have different perceptions of how this evaluation takes place. I thought it might help if I briefly outlined the way that some of these things happen. Typically, the formal evaluation instrument is distributed to the cooperating teacher and to the student teacher before the experience ever begins. Hopefully some of the conferencing

that we have been speaking about would take place about the role of this instrument in the overall grade.

As a university supervisor, I find myself sometimes in a rather precarious situation because I have informal input from a cooperating teacher through my visitations to the site, and sometimes the final evaluations at the end don't really support some of the informal input that I have received throughout the experience. So I rely not only on the instrument, but on my own observations and other forms of input in my final determination of the grade. I believe that sets the stage just a little bit for this.

Mr. Autry. I agree. The evaluation of the student teacher is a problem. I shall never forget the first day I walked into the classroom, the cooperating teacher said to me, "I want you to remember knowing the subject matter is not everything in teaching. There are other things you must do. You must check papers. You must take work home at night. You must attend meetings with the teacher and do all the things that a regular teacher would do." That set the stage for me because when I went there, I thought if I was good in the subject matter and put it over to the students that I would be outstanding. He said, "You must check the ventilation. You must cooperate with other teachers of the department." These things are very important. It is a problem.

Ms. McFarlin. I think that is why conferencing is so important. If the cooperating teacher sits down with the apprentice teacher immediately and says, "These are the things that are important. These are the things that I am going to be looking for. I want you to feel free to ask me at any time if there is a problem or a question."

Open the lines of communication immediately. I find that we have very little formal conferencing with my apprentice teachers, because we have an informal situation every day in which we discuss what's going on or at least every time a problem arises. I think in formal conferencing you can't say every Friday we are going to sit down and talk about the problems. Because if an apprentice teacher has a problem on Wednesday, that problem is very real. And if it has shaken him up in any way, it should be taken care of immediately. It should be initiated by either person at the time it comes up.

Mrs. Johnson. I think it is very important that the student teachers feel very comfortable and free to ask for an opinion or for another way to handle a situation. Or if they feel lost, that they don't hesitate to ask for an idea or a suggestion. Therefore, on the other side, I think the cooperating teacher must be careful to step in if they see one floundering and give an idea or suggestion that they can follow through with. I think that it has to be a two-way street.

Dr. Aichele. Yes, and the misconception on the part of many student teachers is that the cooperating teacher is going to be the one to assign the grade. Students are very grade conscience, so they are very careful in the kinds of discussions that they may initiate with the cooperating teacher. Sometimes some of the criticisms have to be initiated by the cooperating teacher.

Mrs. Johnson. And that student teacher should remember that the

cooperating teacher knows how she feels. Because she, at one time, was a student teacher too, and knows that they are not going to do everything just right. Sometimes they won't do anything just right for two or three years in the classroom. In fact with fifteen years in the classroom, you still find new ways of doing something. So they shouldn't feel bad to ask for help or feel uncomfortable with that kind of situation.

Mr. Autry. I agree. I always tell them, don't be afraid to ask questions any time. If a problem arises, maybe we will discuss this between classes. If the student teacher is doing a good job, I always tell him that he is doing a very good job. If they make an error, I say right away, "If I were you, I would try another method." As someone else said a few minutes ago, if one waits the person may forget what the problem is all about. An open line of communication all the time is the best method.

Dr. Castle. I would agree with that. I think you and Mary Faye both hit upon a key and that is communication. One of the major complaints that I get from working with student teachers is that they haven't received enough feedback from their cooperating teachers. Then when I talk with the cooperating teachers, they say that the student teacher hasn't been listening to the feedback that they have been giving. So to me it seems that we need some kind of continuous form of conferencing and evaluation. I have come up with a system for giving conferencing and evaluation on a weekly basis and on a more specific basis too. I think often we tend to give very global, "You did a good job," or "You did an outstanding job," comments to student teachers rather than being very specific about particular activities that they have been doing in the classroom.

Ms. McFarlin. I tell my student teachers one thing and that is, "If you make mistakes, I make mistakes every single day." Because it's a whole new world every time you walk into that classroom. There is so much dependent upon how things work out: the student situation, how the teacher feels and all of this comes into play. The teacher never does everything right, so the student teacher is not going to do everything right. So it should not come as such a surprise when something does go wrong. If the communication is there, they do not feel that it's very tragic if something goes wrong.

Mr. Autry. I agree with you and I am sure that you are a good teacher because of the way that you are thinking now.

Ms. McFarlin. Thank you. One wonders often.

Mr. Autry. I will tell them too that I am not an expert. If I didn't make errors, I would probably be in Washington D. C. working for the U.S.A. President or a scientific advisor or something like that. So if I make errors, well you expect to.

Dr. Aichele. Moving along the idea of continuity, I really believe in the continuous evaluation. Another misconception that student teachers has is that the only time that they are evaluated is when the supervisor appears and here is this threatening force that enters the environment. When in fact most supervisors aren't really that way. But one of the things that they do is to formally document some of the things that they are observing. And this may be

the only really formal type of feedback that the student teacher gets.

Ms. McFarlin. I would like to ask a question about that. How does the university supervisor formulate this kind of feedback? Do you discuss with the cooperating teacher always? With the student teacher? Or what is your position there?

Dr. Aichele. I spend the majority of my time with the cooperating teacher visiting about the student's progress and observing the student teacher somewhat. But the situation is a little bit unreal when you are there. So what you observe, in a sense, isn't actual. I learn a lot about the environment and the progress that the student teacher is making from conferencing with the cooperating teacher. I feel that the student teacher and the cooperating teacher should resolve most of the issues among themselves in a one-on-one arrangement. Then if there are some problems, the supervisor gets involved. Now we have three people. Perhaps the supervisor is a little more objective, pardon me, introduces an objectivity that wasn't in the relationship before. And then hopefully a solution to whatever problem there was can be resolved.

Ms. McFarlin. You don't have a formal evaluation sheet then. When you come to visit the classroom, are you sitting there with something?

Dr. Aichele. I have prepared a checksheet for myself, yes, modeled very similarly to the final evaluation sheet, but in an abreviated form. Then I make two copies. I give the student teacher a copy, and the cooperating teacher a copy and we discuss it.

Mrs. Johnson. Another area I would emphasize which Otis brought up is the student teachers' willingness to do these outside things that if you don't do, you are not going to do when you are in the classroom. I had a student teacher one time whom I was so pleased with because in our situation, playing the piano is so helpful. This girl just didn't play at all so she took a Saturday workshop to learn how to play the autoharp just so she would be able to work with the children in a musical way. I rated her very highly for that because she was going an extra mile, something not required to make herself a better teacher. When they take things home to make for the next day's plans, I feel that they are putting forth a good attitude and a lot of work for the children's sake.

Ms. McFarlin. My student teacher went to the school play and to the football game last week. The kids really feel that's important and they view him as a teacher simply because he is there and he is a friend. Just knowing that he is interested in them has helped him so much in establishing rapport with the students.

Mr. Autry. I call a person like that a teacher by choice not by accident. I agree that is very important, attending all activities correlates with one's teaching job.

Ms. McFarlin. I would like to get back to a point you made earlier about giving sort of "You did a good job" feedback. I have a tendency to do that sort of thing when I think a student teacher has done a good job. I

really think it is very important for us to say something like, "You really did a good job with that lecture," or "You really did a good job in pulling the students out." We need to give them more specifics. I think that the student teacher needs to also ask the question, "How did I do subject matter wise? How did I do performance wise? Did I pull the students out?" There is a need for us to ask specifics and give specifics.

Dr. Aichele. Perhaps in the initial part of the experience, when the student teacher is in observation, we can direct the observation to looking at those kinds of things in the form of an instrument. As the student observes the cooperating teacher, what are they observing? So many times the observation becomes rather mundane and boring. Your student teachers say that all the time. But perhaps they are not looking for specific things. So if we were to identify specific things that they could look for, then when we ask them later when they are performing, it would be more meaningful.

Mrs. Johnson. I have found that my students quite often have brought a list of things that they were looking for. Perhaps it was directed from their instructor. I am not sure about that. But usually they have a notebook and are taking notes of things they are observing. That is very good.

Mr. Autry. A few minutes ago someone said that conferences should be documented. I agree with that. Because if a student teacher is having a problem, he will probably go back to the campus and say "I was not informed." But if you have this document, you say "Here it is."

Dr. Aichele. It is very important, Otis, from the perspective of the partnership in teacher education.

Dr. Castle. I am afraid that our time for this particular tape is just about up. But I would like to summarize a few of our comments. I think we all view conferencing and evaluation as very important parts of the student teaching experience. And I think that we have also agreed that they should be done on a continuous basis. There certainly should be some kind of specific evaluation done and documentation given.

We hope that our comments have helped to clarify some of the issues related to conferencing and evaluation.

STUDENT TEACHING: A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

Part VIII: Introducing University Students to Pre-Student Teaching Experiences*

Focus Questions

1. What are the objectives of pre-student teaching experiences?
2. What is the role of public school personnel (teachers, administrators) in pre-student teaching experiences?
3. What is the role of the university student in pre-student teaching experiences?
4. What are the university student's general responsibilities during these experiences?
5. What are the university student's responsibilities with respect to each of the following:
   (a) observation
   (b) individual tutoring
   (c) small group instruction
   (d) large group instruction
   (e) bookkeeping tasks (paper grading, etc.)?
6. How can university students profit the most from these experiences?
7. What are some techniques for effective observation and teacher behavior classification?
8. What is the role of micro-teaching (with or without video taping and/or other media forms) in these experiences?
9. How should university students be evaluated during pre-student teaching experiences?

*Pre-student teaching experiences are taken to mean those clinical experiences taken prior to the student teaching usually during the university student's sophomore or junior years.

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STUDENT TEACHING - A COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

PART VIII: INTRODUCING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO PRE-STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Dr. Castle. Welcome to our video tape entitled, "Introducing University Students to Pre-Student Teaching Experiences." I'm Kathryn Castle, a faculty member and university supervisor at Oklahoma State University. On my far right is Otis Autry, a science teacher at Washington High School. Next to Otis is Patty Dyer, an English and Spanish teacher at Wilson Jr. High. Next to Patty is Dr. Douglas Aichele, Director of Student Teaching and a university supervisor at Oklahoma State University. On my left is Velva Jo Johnson, a kindergarten teacher at Cooper Elementary; and next to Velva Jo is Mary Faye McFarlin, a creative writing and language arts teacher at Edison High School.

We have discussed several critical issues concerning the student teaching experience on previous tapes. We've talked about classroom management. We've talked about conferencing and evaluation. We've talked about introducing the student teacher to the actual student teaching experience. And today we're going to back up just a little bit and talk about pre-student teaching experiences. We're defining these as the clinical experiences taken prior to the actual student teaching experience usually taken during the student's sophomore and junior years. We want to look at some of the types of these experiences and also some of the objectives for them. I'd like to begin with my perception of what should be a real objective for a student who has an idea that he/she is interested in teaching and wants to be a teacher. During this period the kinds of things that he/she should be looking for are soul searching. . . asking himself/herself questions concerning whether he/she really want to become a teacher. These students need some experiences which will help them to answer questions such as, "Do I want to do the kinds of things that I observe teachers doing?" "Do I enjoy children?" "Do I like children?" "Do I like to be with children for long periods of time?" So we need some experiences for our students which will help them to answer these kinds of questions.

Dr. Aichele. I can start with a little bit of background of clinical experiences that I think would help us. During the past perhaps ten years, its been increasingly the case that teacher education institutions are concerned with real-life, on-going experiences for the students prior to the student teaching experiencs. Historically, the student teaching experience is the "capstone" experience. And unfortunately, students enter the student teaching experience and learn they don't want to be teachers as a result of this experience. So, teacher educators at the university level have been trying to work with public school teachers to jointly provide experiences for university students that will (1) help them to determine if they themselves want to be teachers and (2) maybe what level and kinds of students they would like to become involved with. In that way, the student teaching experience can truly be a "capstone" experience. It can be in an area with a collection of students that are in the domain of interest of this future teacher. Now some of the things that we like to encourage. . . the kinds of activities we like to encourage during the experience . . . are in the area of (1) observation, (2) tutoring, (3) small group instruction, (4) large group instruction if the university student can handle it, and (5) some of the teacher's "favorite tasks" like recordkeeping. I think that recordkeeping is a

real part of teaching and the students have to be aware of that and they have to realize that it does occupy a large proportion of a teacher's time. I think one criticism that I've heard from students concerns the time spent on observation and on the recordkeeping tasks. Really, I wonder how much valuable observation could take place when the student is sitting in the back of the classroom observing the backs of the students heads. Perhaps the place to be during observation is in the front or at the side of the classroom where one can observe expression and some of the non-verbal communications that teachers elicit. I also think that observation has to be directed. Students have to have a framework for what they are observing; otherwise, it can become very old. It's much like going to the zoo! You observe the animals from afar. You don't observe the student behaviors that the teacher is trying to elicit. So one of the university's responsibilities in this area is to try to encourage and sharpen observation skills.

Dr. Castle. Not only to encourage what to look for, which I think is really important, but also to give the students an opportunity to discuss the kinds of things that they have observed with each other and with someone to guide that discussion.

Dr. Aichele. An area where we desperately need help is in the evaluation of these kinds of experiences because if there's going to be self-screening (where students actually decide they don't want to be teachers and leave the program) or identification of characteristics that need work, then this is where the university and the public schools really have to work together. I need help from you people on how we are to evaluate these kinds of experiences. What kinds of things do you look for when observers come for two or three hours a week and be part of your class?

Ms. Dyer. I haven't really had this experience, so I'm not really the one to speak. If I can go back to one thing that you mentioned, Doug, I think one of the key things that we have to be involved in is this pre-student teaching experience is the idea of direction for the student. As we were discussing before the tape began, it is possible that a student at the sophomore or junior year in college may enter the classroom and after spending a semester they may decide that teaching is not for him. But, on the other hand, I think a student who is not directed through the experience or who is perhaps poorly directed through the experience, may tend to become overwhelmed with some of the things that teachers do have to do in the classroom, may tend to become frightened with the idea of teaching a large group. Possibly with guidance, maybe some of these fears could be overcome and I would hope that we wouldn't lose very good prospective teachers through this experience.

Dr. Aichele. That's a good point.

Ms. Dyer. I think that guidance and direction is the key. To me, guidance on the part of both the university and the cooperating school involved would be even more important at this point, possibly more than in the student teaching experience.

Ms. McFarlin. I found this to be true. I had a student observe last year and it was the first one I ever had and he was there for one hour once a week and I asked him to sit in front of the room. But, he happened to be there

during a class when I could not talk with him and I really didn't know what he was doing there. I really did not know what to tell him to do. If I had it to do over, I would have shown him the kinds of papers we had as a high school English teacher. So many of the students don't know what to expect of student writing. . . they don't know how to lead a discussion. It seems to me, that students need to observe in various areas in order to find out whether they really want to be in junior high, elementary, high school or what. If they see my briefcase every afternoon, I am sure they might not want to go into high school teaching. . . with the compositions that you have to grade! But, I do think that you at the university level need to give the students some guidance, you need to give us some guidance in telling us how far you want us to go with them because I did not know for example, that you wanted tutoring experiences for small group instruction. . . this kind of thing. . . and I think that's good. I think that this is the key right here.

Dr. Aichele. Typically, my observations are that a student is assigned at a particular level and these assignments are usually made to complement the student's university enrollment, courses that the students are taking in content areas would hopefully be supported by their visitations to the school. A student would initially observe and then work gradually into one-on-one tutoring or small group instruction. Then, if the teacher thought that the student could handle the entire group, perhaps he/she would let the student have the group for an entire hour.

Ms. Johnson. I am sure that a very real problem here though is your geography because OSU or OU are located in towns that are not quite so large as Oklahoma City or Tulsa. Students may not have an opportunity to take a course on campus and travel very much and spend much time in the classroom. The few students that I have had for observation have been from OSU and it's been more of a walk-through, "how-do-you-do" and maybe the children had time to do one little thing and then they had to be on their way because it was time to go. . . and the transportation was a problem. Another group that I had that came through several years ago were trying to visit three or four schools in one day and that's where I felt they didn't see much of anything. They were just whizzing around all the time. So, I am sure that this is a geographical problem, but I don't know exactly what the answer would be when you have to have students on campus.

Dr. Aichele. I think that we have pretty well spoken to that as we usually make our assignments to complement the student's enrollment, so that OSU students wouldn't complete pre-student teaching experiences in Tulsa, but rather in schools closer to Stillwater. We try to place most of the pre-student teaching students in the local area. But I think you mentioned one thing that we should note. I think that we all agree that the one-hour walk-through doesn't work. . . to accomplish the kinds of objectives that we have in mind for these clinical experiences.

Ms. Johnson. I would like to tell of a personal experience of a cousin of mine who is going to school in another state and she had pre-student teaching experience during her sophomore year that was based on observation. I talked to her the other day about it and she said that she was assigned playground duty one or two afternoons a week. She also worked with children in small groups, did paper work and many of the things that were mentioned earlier. She said that

her teacher wanted her to teach a third grade math lesson. She worked very hard to prepare for it and when she was through with it, she said she knew that teaching was just not her thing. She said she didn't feel a rapport, she didn't enjoy it, she said everything about it just turned her off. And I thought that was very good because she still had plenty of time to change her mind if that wasn't her thing.

Mr. Autry. You know, I agree with you. The pre-student teaching experiences in the second or third year of college I think are very important because here a student will have a chance to determine if he wants to be a teacher. I remember a statement made by my cooperating teacher, "there will be plenty to do, knowing the subject matter is not all. . . you have to do simple things, such as ventilation, grading papers, check students on the playground, and if they are small check to see if they have their coats on when they leave." If they have had this experience and have seen this go on and are told that this is a part of their duties, then they are not upset or shocked.

Ms. McFarlin. I think that we all have to be careful here in what Ms. Johnson was talking about in presenting one lesson and then saying that teaching wasn't for her. I think you have to be sure that the students do have enough training there, or at least enough experiences, so that in that first time you can be so frightened and you can feel so inadequate and maybe the second time she would have felt differently.

Ms. Johnson. Of course this was an ongoing thing through the semester. After all of these things she said that the whole package just wasn't her thing.

Mr. Autry. Another good idea is to have the student visit other classrooms and other schools too. A situation in one school will not happen in another school; there will be different situations, different methods, and different techniques of doing things. I think this is very important.

Ms. Johnson. Quite often we take our students to the schools that might be "ideal" - the ones that are the modern schools and the students don't see that this is just one special situation and things are not always that way.

Ms. Dyer. I believe even subject matter is important. When I was in college for one reason or another I decided that I wanted to be an English teacher at the secondary level. And frankly, I had not seen inside other classrooms except just as a teacher to go into maybe a special education classroom to see another teacher for one reason or another. I spent very little time in the science classrooms. . . even less in the math classroom, thank heavens. Anyway, why I decided to teach English, I am not quite sure. I think even subject matter areas could be more deeply explored as well as levels.

Dr. Aichele. I would go one step further, I think that a total orientation to the school would be very helpful. I have in mind that the teacher who is supervising the student might introduce the student to the principal and to the various services that the school offers. What this does is to help the student gain an aquaintance to the environment, and a university student is acclimated typically to going to class and doing some homework and some outside activities. The public school teaching commitment is really a lot more and I think that if

the student gets a feel for that early it would be very helpful.

Dr. Castle. One of the things that we do on campus is micro teaching; we put the pre-student teacher up in front of a group of students and have them teach a lesson. I think that this is an excellent opportunity to give them a chance to see what they look like and sound like in front of a group of people and it's a good lesson in self-analysis.

Mr. Autry. I agree with you. I believe that a person that has worked with students in church and wide community activities and here they realize too whether they want to be a teacher or not and I think that this is very important.

Dr. Castle. Well, I hate to say this, but we are out of time once again. Lets just briefly summarize, we viewed the pre-student teaching experiences as being an important opportunity for the student to decide whether or not teaching is really for them and we need the kinds of experiences to help them make this decision.